



STANFORD UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

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STANFORD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Department of Genetics

January 14, 1971

Dear Miss Tocknell:

I am glad to furnish the information that you requested. However, I am not necessarily an intransigent opponent of nuclear plant development. Carefully regulated, this may give us many advantages over the use of fossil fuels for power.

There are, I believe two important issues:

1) The regulatory standards. These are now under further study by the National Academy of Sciences. I have advocated a reduction of the standard from (approximately) a doubling of background to one-tenth that level. The AEC has repeatedly stated that this is consistent with their actual practice, and I believe that there is no economical or technological obstacle to working at that reduced level for at least another decade, a time during which some present uncertainties should be cleared up. In terms of the attached analysis, this would reduce the annual health cost from \$10 per person to \$1, a point at which we would then rationally focus on other hazards as more intrusive. Also, because of public sensitivities, a standard that is logically constructed as an average permitted exposure will surely be pressed to become a maximum individual tolerance, so that the actual costs will be further reduced.

2) The compliance of a given design with these standards. This is an intricate problem, and deserves as wide a range of technically informed attention as can be recruited. It is all too easy to overlook some ecosystemic concentration of a radioactive isotope that may upset otherwise impeccable engineering calculations. One can then fairly demand full and early disclosure of the relevant design information as an essential part of a proper "due process" to protect the environment and the public health. I cannot judge how well this has been done in your local situation.

I warrant that this letter and the signed attachments reflect my best knowledge and true belief in this matter, and you may use them in their entirety.

Yours sincerely,